(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that due to Iran vote the relationship between India and Iran has suffered badly; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to normalise the relationship between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors has been discussing the issue of Iran's nuclear programme, its compliance with its NPT obligations and its Safeguard Agreement for more than two years. At its meeting held from September 19-24, 2005, the IAEA Board adopted a resolution on the subject by a vote of 22 votes in favour, 1 against and 12 abstentions. India voted for the resolution. The resolution requests Director General (DG), IAEA to *inter-alia* report again to the Board on the implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in Iran. The issue will be discussed further at the meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors commencing from November 24, 2005. India is carefully monitoring the evolving situation. Government will take a decision based on a careful assessment of the situation, the report of the DG, IAEA, keeping in view India's national interests.

(c) and (d) India attaches importance to maintaining traditionally close relations with Iran. Former External Affairs Minister met the Iranian Vice President Parviz Dawoodi on 26 October 2005 in Moscow on the sidelines of the summit meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. The Iranian Vice President conveyed that Iran attached great importance not just to economic cooperation between India and Iran but also to the civilisational and cultural links that bind the two countries together. India and Iran have long-standing and extensive cooperation, which is of the benefit to and in the interest of both countries.

Permanent seat in Security Council

189. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of an editorial in a leading newspaper

saying that the Indian Government's foreign policy is in danger of becoming hostage of its "obsession" with securing a permanent seat in the UN Security Council;

(b) if so, Government's reaction in this regard; and

(c) whether our efforts are effective to mobilize world opinion to India becoming a permanent member of Security Council?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government of India is engaged with other Member States of the United Nations on various issues related to the reform of the United Nations, including reform of the Security Council. The Government believes that the UN Security Council should be expanded in both the permanent and non-permanent categories so that it reflects contemporary geopolitical realities. India's impeccable credentials to become a permanent member of the Security Council are widely recognized and there has been a steady accretion of support for India's candidature. The Government is continuing its efforts to mobilize further support for India's candidature. The Government's foreign policy is aimed at achieving several objectives and securing a permanent seat in the UN Security Council is one of the important objectives.

Amritsar Lahore bus service

190. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA:
SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether as a further confidence building measures to improve and increase people to people contacts between India and Pakistan, Government have introduced a weekly bus service between Amritsar and Lahore;

(b) whether bus service has been started as per schedule;

(c) if so, the welcome result of the introduction of the bus service so far;

(d) if not, the reasons therefore and by when a fresh date is likely to be announced; and